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Creating Cosmopolitan Past. Local and Transitional Influences in Memory Work in Schindler's Factory in Kraków, Poland.

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The present article tests the limits of cosmopolitan memory. It spotlights a unique case study, the permanent exhibition in Schindler's Factory in Kraków, Poland, shaped by a group of local curators and politicians, as well as representatives of foreign memorial institutions and supranational NGOs. The thrust to create a cosmopolitan narrative came from Polish curators, but their vision was curbed by both a local politician and the head of a global NGO. The version of cosmopolitanism offered in Kraków engaged with contemporary Polish problems. However, it ignored Polish anti-Semitism and perpetration. The article reveals how in practice the cosmopolitan message is shaped, what propels it forward, what limits its horizons.

Keywords: Holocaust memory; cosmopolitan memory; museums; Kraków; Poland

> The aim of the exhibition is to show the history of Kraków at a time when it was the capital of General Government. This history will be presented […] through the stories of people – Poles, Jews, Germans: their daily life, attitudes, choices, tragedies.[1]

The above quote comes from an introduction to an early, and never realized, scenario to an exhibition in Oskar Schindler's Factory in Krakow. It offers a rare insight into the intricacies of local "memory work", that is the continuous process of reworking cultural memory.[2] In the early twenty-first century, local memory activists insisted on a cosmopolitan reading of the past, and tried to overcome some Polish and international taboos around cultural memory

while at the same time installing new myths. By 2010, the most popular Polish representations of the Holocaust still revolved around one-dimensional images of: blameless and heroic Poles, evil German perpetrators and passive Jews. This ethno-nationalist narrative either pushed Jews to the background or forgot them; either way, they were always represented as members of an outside, and unimportant, group.[3] Outside of Poland, narratives of the Holocaust presented a more complex view of the social position of the Jews, and Poles were conspicuous by their near absence. Moreover, as this article confirms, some international activists continued to fall back on the image of the Germans as blood-thirsty Nazi murderers. Working against those strands of cultural memory, activists from Kraków insisted on depicting the past as a story of people whose lives were altered and destroyed by the Second World War. Instead of reducing the historic Jews to helpless victims who, because of their own passivity and Otherness, were responsible for their own fate, they planned to look into individual stories and to show the circumstances of the destruction of this minority. Instead of conflating historic German perpetrators with present German society, they proposed to explain the sources of criminality of the Nazis. Instead of focusing on Polish heroes and martyrs, they intended to show daily life in the occupied city. In so doing, they aimed to substitute the helper-victim-perpetrator idiom with an image of cosmopolitan, that is supporting 'tolerance, multiethnicity, plurality, and cultural difference,' past that nevertheless ignored some problem of this past.[4]

This article examines the genealogy of the exhibition in Schindler's Factory. Analyzing the efforts of supranational memory activists whose work shaped the final version of the exhibition in this Polish, yet globally important, site of memory, the present research problematizes widespread interpretations of transnational memory work in Poland and in post-Communist Europe. This article challenges interpretations which have presented cosmopolitan standards as a product of globalization and external (Western) pressure. By contrast it builds on that scholarship which locates sources of cosmopolitan engagement within Poland and in the processes of glocalization. It focuses on a contentious case study that aimed to substitute highly nationalistic representations with a cosmopolitan vision that occasionally had little grounding in history and ignored persistent problems from the local past. It demonstrates that even the most ambitious cosmopolitan projects were curtailed on the one hand by competition between activists, and, on the other, by the existing, local frameworks of cultural memory. It nevertheless claims that, however problematic and stereotypical, Schindler's Factory exhibition nevertheless contributed to cosmopolitanization of Polish cultural memory. In so doing, this article questions the limits of cosmopolitan

memory work suggesting that it is the *process* not the short-lived *effect* that should be the focus of scholarly attention.

Cosmopolitan memory work

This article is concerned with memorial projects that attempted to dismantle old stereotypes, perceived by the museum curators as wrong, and replace them with a set of new if equally stereotypical representations. However problematic their interpretation of the past, particularly with regard to the history of Polish anti-Semitism, memory activists in Kraków nevertheless sought to usher in interpretations of history built around openness, tolerance and inclusivity. For scholars such as Montserrat Guibernau, Michael Meng, Ewa Ochman, and Sharon Macdonald, all three of these values are manifestations of cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitan memory work. Guibernau, in her in-depth analysis of various types of identities in the twentieth century, sees cosmopolitanism as 'the adherence to a set of principles and values destined to attain global social justice.'[5] She refers to a new 'attitude towards difference itself' and to 'find[ing] some universal standard concerning what ought to be regarded as inalienable rights and principles to be applied to all members of humanity.'[6] She concludes that 'cosmopolitan values defend the equality and freedom of all human beings[…].'[7] Similarly, Michael Meng defines cosmopolitan memories as supporting 'tolerance, multiethnicity, plurality, and cultural difference,'[8] while Sharon Macdonald frames them as a 'celebration of difference.'[9] More recently, Ewa Ochman has shown that recognition and acceptance of national, regional, and ethnic difference lies at the heart of the process of cosmopolitanization of memory.[10] In other words, cosmopolitan values assume *a priori* the inalienable rights of each and every human being. Cosmopolitanism, then, seeks to ensure the 'recognition of difference' and at the same time to prevent stigmatization or alienation.

As a normative program, cosmopolitanism, remains an appealing avenue for Euro-Atlantic and global societies.[11] It is however, not a program without problems. Some, as for example David Miller, point out the impossibility of implementation of cosmopolitanism as a global, political system. In Miller's view, cosmopolitanism can be either an exercise in wishful thinking, or a program of new imperialism where the adherence to cosmopolitan standards and values would be forced on communities across the globe.[12] Another, and far more pressing from the point of view of the present research, problem is the use of cosmopolitanism as a screen on which societies can project the image of the Self that is as

perfect as is it disingenuous. This strategy has been observed in multiple context. Blossom Ngum Fondo has recently analyzed the way Britain projected an image of cosmopolitan openness onto its former colonies. In practice, as she demonstrates, this image only served to mask the racism which was an experience of vast majority of postwar, non-white migrants to the UK.[13]

Both points are extremely valid, however, they pertain to a particle way of understanding of cosmopolitanism. Gerard Delanty suggest approaching the problem from a different perspective. 'Viewed in this light,' writes Delanty 'the question then is not whether or not cosmopolitanism exists, but to what degree it is present in a given social phenomenon'.[14] His approach is important for this essay because it reminds that cosmopolitanism should be seen in two ways. The normative concept, a set of rules and values, often stemming from the Western philosophical tradition is what scholars most often understand as cosmopolitism.[15] It is my contention that vast majority of critics of the concept, Miller and Ngum Fondo for example, refer to normative cosmopolitism. They comment on the impossibility (Miller) or the failure (Ngum Fondo) of implementation of a certain Weberian ideal type of cosmopolitanism. Delanty, however, suggests focusing on what he calls 'critical cosmopolitanism.' In his view, shared by this article, cosmopolitanism is a process. It is a set of policies and ideas designed to attain (some) of the cosmopolitan values. If fact, Delanty defines critical cosmopolitanism as 'an account of social and political reality that seeks to identify transformational possibilities within the present.'[16] In this view imperfections in implementation can, and should, be identified and criticized. They do not however negate the process of cosmopolitanization, the pursuit of the final goal.

Cosmopolitan memories of the Holocaust lie at the intersection between the general processes of cosmopolitanization and global memory work. The emergence of these memories is often linked to the Americanization of representations of the Holocaust and to the glocalization of culture. Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider were among the first to comment on the cosmopolitan memory of the Holocaust. They argue that the memory of the Holocaust evolved over decades to emerge as a universal memory of mankind, and a measure of good and evil.[17] They note that the Holocaust became a future-oriented memory that supported, and continues to support, the regime of human rights;[18] indeed, their argument culminates in an analysis of the international intervention in Kosovo in 1999, which they see as motivated primarily by the 'Never Again Holocaust' lesson.[19] In their view the Holocaust became global memory in the transition from 'First' to 'Second Modernity,' and with the 'cracking' of the 'container of the nation-state'.[20] While commenting on the

deterritorialization of memories, Levy and Sznaider nevertheless acknowledge the importance of the 'local experience.' In fact, they choose to discuss glocalization, a process in which 'global concerns […] become part and parcel of everyday local experiences,' rather than the more one-sided system of globalization.[21]

Even though acknowledging that glocalization exists, Levy and Sznaider insist that the cosmopolitan values attached to the memory of the Holocaust emerged as an effect of memory work in Germany, Israel, and the USA, in fact they tend to talk about Americanized memories floating through networks of global connections. [22] In other words, cosmopolitan values emerged from confrontations between victims and perpetrators (and the communities of their descendants), with the role of diaspora Jews being particularly important. To this end, Levy and Sznaider state that 'the decontextualized memory of the Holocaust facilitates this [cosmopolitanization of memory-insertion mine]. In its «universalized» and «Americanized» form, it *provides* [emphasis mine] Europeans with a new sense of «common memory».'[23] They suggest that the emergence of cosmopolitan memories of the Holocaust was impossible outside of Germany, Israel, and the USA, and that it was a memory that was 'provided' to Europeans. James Mark confirms this idea suggesting that cosmopolitan memory work, particularly in post-Communist Europe, was ultimately a superficial export. Commenting on the external, Western pressure exerted upon the new states of the East-Central Europe, Mark notes that 'remembering the Holocaust was considered a vital part of "being European" by many western European political elites.'[24] He demonstrates that, in the runup to inclusion in both institutions, NATO and the EU insisted that East-Central European countries, including Poland, accommodate the Western modes of Holocaust commemoration. This observation has most recently been confirmed by Marek Kucia, Maria Mälksoo, and Eva-Clarita Onken.[25] The fact that cosmopolitan values were imposed on East-Central Europe in general and Poland in particular from the outside, often, (as noted above) by countries that fail to adhere to those values themselves, seem to now be beyond doubt.

However inspiring this theory of cosmopolitanization-as-westernization is, it is not without its problems.[26] This article broadly agrees with, Andreas Huyssen's understanding of glocalization of memory as a process in which 'discourses of lived memory will remain tied primarily to specific communities and territories, even if the concern with memory itself has become a transnational phenomenon across the world.'[27] The global framework may impact memory work but the process of remembrance remains tied to the locality. Indeed, there is a strong strand of scholarship that identifies the sources of critical or cosmopolitan engagement with the contentious past in Polish soul-searching, rather than western pressure. In recent

years authors such as Geneviève Zubrzycki, Erica Lehrer and Michael Meng acknowledge this trend. Zubrzycki analyses the clashes around the understanding of Auschwitz. The conflicts were started by Western activists who tried to impose on Poland an understanding of Auschwitz as the universal symbol of the Jewish suffering and not, as it had been for Poles, the shrine of Polish martyrdom. Nevertheless, as Zubrzycki demonstrates the external influence only served as catalyst to an '*intra*national' conflict, a conflict that played out internally, between Poles and was motivated by Polish reinterpretations of their past.[28] Similarly, Lehrer and Meng note the 'unevenness of the Europeanization of Holocaust memory' and go on to acknowledge that 'a Polish perspective is not defined by loss or lack or a need for "catching up" to the West.'[29] The picture that emerges from this scholarship is that of memory work in Poland as an outcome of local competition over meaning that plays out inside a framework set globally. The cosmopolitan norms, the importance of the Holocaust in that framework, are set globally. The content, shape, and narrative of memorials is created locally. Occasionally, external actors (in particular representatives of the Jewish diaspora) directly impact memory work and their impact is often recognized as beneficial for Polish memory work.[30]

The present article builds on those observations and is particularly interested in testing the limits of cosmopolitan memory. It seeks to spotlight a unique case study, the permanent exhibition in Schindler's Factory, shaped by a group of local curators and politicians, as well as representatives of foreign memorial institutions and supranational NGOs. It claims that the thrust to create a cosmopolitan narrative came from Polish curators, but their vision was curbed by both a local politician and the head of a global NGO. The particular vision of cosmopolitanism offered by the Kraków curators intended to engage with very practical, contemporary Polish problems. However, the approach of the museum curators was selective. The exhibition insisted on including Jews into the Polish nation but at the same time it ignored anti-Semitism that led to denunciation, blackmail and killings during the war. A close look at the process of creation of this representation reveals how in practice the cosmopolitan message is shaped, what propels it forward, what limits its horizons.

Significantly, and in line with Delanty's reasoning, expressions of cosmopolitan values can only be identified when seen in historical context. Instances of openness and tolerance are, in fact, relative, and dependent on the culture from which they emerge. This bears a question: how to measure those expression of cosmopolitanism? This article claims that, for example, a decision to discuss the Holocaust at an exhibition in a Polish museum in 1983 was an evidence of openness to the history of the Other. In 2010, on the other hand, the inclusion

of the Holocaust went without saying, and the only area of doubt lay on the relative proportions and connections between the Polish and Jewish parts of the War story. To make those arguments I rely on Michael Rothberg's grid that allows for mapping representations of the past against a framework of cosmopolitan memory. Building on his concept of multidirectional memory first outlined in *Multidirectional Memory. Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* Rothberg presented this grid in an article 'From Gaza to Warsaw: Mapping Multidirectional Memory.'[31] In his view, representations of the past can be qualified as either supporting solidarity and cosmopolitanism or strengthening exclusivity and chauvinism.

Rothberg begins by reminding us that collective memory is not a zero-sum game. For example, memories of Jewish suffering do not 'crowd out' memories of Polish suffering, a point worth noting as this fear was often expressed by scholars and memory activists alike. Rather, in Rothberg's view, 'the result of memory conflict is not less memory, but more.'[32] In other words, memories of the Jewish suffering pave way for remembrance of other instances of suffering. At the same time, the inclusion of suffering of other groups does not diminish the suffering, or memories of thereof, of the Jews.[33] Acknowledging that some memory activists do in fact intend to obscure information about suffering of one group with memories of suffering of another, Rothberg proposes a means of ascertaining whether historic representations of the past support openness and tolerance, or not. His suggestion is to map representations against a grid built around '*an axis of comparison* (defined by a continuum stretching from equation to differentiation) and an *axis of political affect* (defined by a continuum stretching from solidarity to competition—two complex, composite affects) [emphasis in original].'[34]

As an example of 'differentiated solidarity,' of representations aiming at attaining cosmopolitan values and interracial solidarity, Rothberg offers an article written in 1952 by a W. E. B. Du Bois, black activist and scholar. In 'The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto' Du Bois offers a nuanced comparison between the fate of the African Americans and Jews during the Second World War at the same time highlighting different proportions of suffering. Moreover, noting that 'The race problem in which I was interested cut across lines of color and physique and belief and status and was a matter of cultural patterns, perverted teaching and human hate and prejudice, which reached all sorts of people and caused endless evil to all men' Du Bois aimed to inspire a future fight against racial oppression and inequality.[35] He acknowledged both similarities and differences in two instances of breaches of human rights and called for opposition to those breaches.[36]

On the opposite side of the grid Rothberg places an email sent by an American lecturer in 2009 to his students which included a photo-essay depicting the bombing of Gaza by Israel. The email seemingly expressed values similar to the Du Bois' article. It placed the suffering of two groups side by side and called for an end to the atrocities. However, it ultimately served to fan hatred and strengthen conflicting identities as it pitted people against each other and made ungrounded comparisons. Under the headline 'parallel images of Nazis and Israelis' and explaining that 'Gaza is Israel's Warsaw' the photo-essay conflated (often by blurring the borders between images) the suffering of Jewish population during the Second World War (mostly in the Warsaw Ghetto) and Palestinian population in Gaza. The email conflated the suffering of two groups, which was not only ahistorical but also rendered Palestinian suffering invisible. In the photo-essay their fate was interchangeable with the, far better know and recognized, fate of Warsaw Jews. There was nothing unique about the injustices at Gaza, they were just a version of a past atrocity.[37]

Following Rothberg's logic, memories that express 'differentiated solidarity' are most supportive of cosmopolitanism as they sensitize us to varied and unique instances of suffering of varied and unique human beings and call for actions against all such breaches of human rights.[38] This Weberian ideal type of memory expressing differentiated solidarity, would compare the suffering of two groups, acknowledging *both* similarities *and* differences (in form, or in intensity and magnitude). It would also acknowledge the suffering caused, not only experienced. Cosmopolitanism, in its fullest form, recognizes the value of each human being and therefore should challenge all transgressions of that value. Recognizing that members of the in-group are capable of violence is as important as acknowledging the suffering of out-groups. Only from this point, new interventions into memory could go on to express affective solidarity. For example, the representation that would score top marks on Rothberg's grid would identify the similarities but also the differences between the suffering experienced by Jews and by Poles during the Second World War, would acknowledge that some of the Jewish suffering was caused by Poles, and would express solidarity with Jewish victims. This could generate a popular realization that suffering can be caused by a number of prejudices, including skin color and race, and is therefore essentially arbitrary. The initial scenario of the exhibition at Schindler's Factory could be interpreted in this way, in so far as its aim was to present 'the stories of people – Poles, Jews, Germans: their daily life, attitudes, choices, tragedies.'[39]

Memory Work in Schindler's Factory

The present research is concerned with the memorialization of Schindler's Factory and more generally with the transnationally shaped, local memorial discourses about the Second World War's past. The War, and the Nazi invasion, engulfed Poland in 1939 rupturing the history of Kraków's sizeable and diverse Jewish minority. Kraków, the capital of the General Government – a state-like entity fully dependent to the Reich – was to become a *judenrein*, a Jew-free city. Initial stigmatization, circumscription of freedoms, imposition of forced and often humiliating labor, and random acts of violence were succeeded by mass deportations and the creation of a ghetto. In 1940, most Jews were forced to leave the city. The remaining few were moved to a district of Podgórze, where in March 1941 the ghetto was created. Subsequently, in the June and October *Aktionen* of 1942, most of them were sent to the death camp in Bełżec. Before the final liquidation of the ghetto, in March 1943, Plaszow Camp, for both Jewish and Polish inmates, was created in southern Podgórze. To make way for the Camp, the Nazis levelled two Jewish cemeteries. The history of the Camp is associated with two names. The first is Amon Goeth, notorious for his cruelty; the longest-serving commander of the Camp. The second is Oskar Schindler, a Nazi entrepreneur, who employed Jews in his factory/sub-camp, and ultimately succeeded in saving some 1,300 inmates. Those he saved were among the very few that survived Plaszow; the rest were sent to Bełżec and Auschwitz.[40] While still in the Ghetto, young Jews tried to organize a local branch of the Jewish Fighting Organization. It never became more than a group of friends but was responsible for acts of sabotage and a few direct attacks on Nazis.[41]

Commenting on the pre-war anti-Semitism Antony Polonsky, one of the leading experts on Polish-Jewish history, states that 'Kraków was probably the city with the most harmonious Polish-Jewish relations.'[42] This is not to say that anti-Semitism was never a problem in the city. To the contrary, throughout the 1920s and the 1930s repeated attacks on the Jewish minority took place. The offices of a Jewish newspaper, headquarters of a political party and a house of the university president (a man of Jewish descent) were set on fire.[43] Nationalistic students of the university made successful calls for ghetto benches, and attacks on shops were documented.[44] During the War the relationship between Krakowians of both ethnicities continued according to the existing patters. Some ethnic Poles supported Jews but, as Chwalba admits, denunciations of Jews hiding on the 'Aryan side' was rife. 'There existed special neighborhood committees [made of ethnic Poles – addition mine] responsible for searching for Jews in their areas of Kraków' writes he.[45] 'Without support and help from

some Krakowians Germans would be far less successful [in exterminating Jews - addition mine].'[46] Finally, as early as in the August of 1945 the first Polish postwar pogrom took place in Kraków. So, if Polonsky is doubtlessly right noting that, in comparison to the rest of the country the Polish-Jewish relations in Kraków were 'the most harmonious' this is only because the bar for 'harmony' was set extremely low. Ethnic Poles remained anti-Semitic throughout the twentieth century and this always tainted their relationship with the Jewish minority.

Of central importance to the history of KL Plaszow, Oskar Schindler's works were, however, forgotten for most of the postwar period. In fact, the site served its original purpose as a factory.[47] The plan to create a museum in the one remaining building of *Emaillienwerk* was instigated by the mayoral office of Kraków. Fresh from its success with reorganizing the *lieu de mémoire* located in the old ghetto, and feeling pressure of the Warsaw authorities' investing heavily into ethno-nationalist memory projects, the municipality bought Schindler's former factory in 2005.[48] The decision was made due to the factory's presumed historic value, and to the aura surrounding the site. The aura of the building, that is, its 'sense of distance in time and space that underlines claims to uniqueness, authenticity, and tradition,' owed almost entirely to Spielberg's *Schindler's List*.[49] In the 1990s, after the success of the film, local entrepreneurs from Kazimierz responded to popular demand and began to organize trips to Lipowa Street, the site of the factory. By 2005, the Municipality had recognized the newly created aura of the site, and decided to turn the building into museum.

The factory was ceded to the Historical Museum of the City of Kraków (Muzeum Historyczne Miasta Krakowa - MHK). Even though a local institution, the MHK was an organization with a clear, ambitious mission and vision. The curatorial team consisted of professional historians, often graduates of the local Jagiellonian University. Some, like Monika Bednarek (the head of the team) and Grzegorz Jeżowski, worked full time for the Museum but some of their colleagues were also active in research and memory work outside the MHK. Edyta Gawron was a lecturer of Jewish Studies at the University, while Barbara Zbroja worked at the National Archive and at the same time published extensively on the Jewish past of Kraków. Katarzyna Zimmerer, a journalist and a public intellectual, authored a book on the wartime life of the Jewish community in Kraków.[50] The expertise of the group and the backing of the long-established institution made the curators capable of negotiating their power *vis-à-vis* both the proponents of the ethno-nationalist narrative and other local, national, and supranational activists. Their work was an example of the glocalization of urban

memory. Local memory work, stemming from local needs, was conducted in dialogue with and input from global actors and in front of a global audience. The exhibition was a reflection of Polish memory struggles, but it was also prepared with both the domestic and the international audience in mind.

The first draft of the scenario of the Factory exhibitions suggested that Poles, Jews, and Germans should be depicted as ordinary people and emphasis should be placed on 'their daily lives, attitudes, choices, tragedies.'[51] This proposal echoed, on two different levels, two interventions into historiography. On one, more general level, the curators evoked the ideas developed by Christopher Browning in his ground-breaking *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, a book that attempts to understand people, rather than accuse a nation. Instead of assigning blame to the 'Germans' or even the 'Nazis,' Browning investigates the motivations and circumstances of individual men.[52] On a second and more specific level, the curators referred to a text by Andrzej Chwalba, a historian from the Jagiellonian University, entitled *Okupacyjny Kraków* (*Kraków under Occupation*). Chwalba divides his narrative into four main sections, which comment respectively on the Polish, Jewish, Ukrainian, and German sides of Kraków. He describes how, during the War, Kraków underwent changes intended to make it the capital of Germandom in the East, and discusses the daily lives of the German officials and their families that settled in the city.[53] Following these ideas, the early drafts of the Factory exhibition scenario aimed to demonstrate how Nazi policies 'provoked various responses among Poles, Jews, and Germans,' and how the conflict turned some ordinary Germans into ruthless killers.[54] Nazi cruelty would not be presented as an inherently German value, but rather as the consequence of a historical process of radicalization.

This very initial idea, even though never realized, can be read as a programme, as a statement of position taken by the local curators. Measured against the Rothberg's framework is also a relatively strong example of differentiated solidarity. The curators insisted that comparing the War fates of three nations is feasible and morally sound. They assumed that it was possible, in the space of one exhibition to juxtapose lives of Jews, Poles, and Germans, and to solidarize with fates of all three groups. It was very clear from the scenario that the main focus would be on the lives and suffering of Poles and Jews but at the same time visitors would learn about the motivations, worldviews, and priorities of Germans (not all of whom were directly part of the killing machine) living in Kraków.[55] One of the main themes of the exhibitions, 'Daily life in the occupied city: Poles, Germans, Jews' was to focus on 'how denizens of the city coped with the reality of occupation.'[56] It would inform about the

types of work (in factories and administrations) that Germans had done and about their pastimes.[57] Importantly, it followed from the section on the 'System of terror and repression' thus balancing the picture and making sure that the past crimes would not be whitewashed.[58]

In analyzing this mission statement attention has to be paid not only to what the draft outlined but also to what it omitted. Every exhibition, every intervention into cultural memory in general, is always a creation, an image of the past drawn by the curators and not a 'perfect' representation of history. Therefore, only identifying what is missing allows to fully understand what is present. In the case of Schindler's Factory the topic conspicuous by its absence was Polish anti-Semitism and in particular Polish implication in the Holocaust. Some references were made to the so called *szmalcownicy* but these were highly problematic. The term *szmalcownicy* denominates Poles who blackmailed and sold Jews to the Nazis. It also equates them with people on the margins of society. Throughout the postwar period it has been successfully employed to assuage a generalized Polish guilt and direct it instead towards a tiny minority, symbolically excluded from the nation. Joanna Ambrosewicz-Jacobs has recently noted that 'The theory that views szmalcowniks (blackmailers) as the margins of society did not survive the fall of communism.'[59] Her optimism seems premature. Blaming the *szmalcownicy* remains a strategy used to redirect the blame for Polish crimes away from the core of Polish society.

The idea to present the lives of Jews, Poles, and Germans via differentiated solidarity and to omit the problem of Polish guilt was not an accident or a fad. Nor was it a political gambit although politics did come into play. It tied to an established trajectory of Polish memory work that insists on redefining the nation along the lines of inclusivity and openness and that works in opposition to the ethno-nationalist narrative that clings to the image of Poland as a nation-state and Poles as Catholics.[60] Geneviève Zubrzycki has recently noted that representations of the Jewish past are of key importance in those battles. What she terms the 'resurrection of the Jew' is 'a broader and long-standing effort […] to soften, stretch, and reshape the symbolic boundaries of Polishness that the Right has sought to harden and shrink using a conservative, nationalist version of Catholicism as its primary tool.'[61] In her view, the axis of the symbolic conflict over Polishness in the early twenty-first century lies precisely in the definition of the nation as civic or ethnic. Both sides of the conflict tend to use the figure of the Jew as a measure of adherence to *their* standards. The proponents of the critical approach insist on reincluding Jews into the definition of Polishness while supporters of the ethno-nationalist vision maintain the Jew in the position of the Threatening Other and brand internal enemies (including progressive members of the Catholic Church) as Jews.[62] Equally,

Zubrzycki claims that 'Polish philosemitism is part of a larger process of redefining national identity.'[63]

Remembrance of the Holocaust and the Jewish past is then a function of this conflict. In the first instance, it is used to reshape the definition of the Polish nation in the present. The re-examination of the Polish past as such and coming to terms with Polish guilt is used in the process of redefinition of Polish identity but is subjugated to this process. In this view remembrance of the Jewish past is a tool in dismantling the Right's hold on the national discourse, a strategy employed to open Polishness for multiple minorities and not only for the Jews.

This is not to say that the critique of the Polish sins is not important for at least some of the memory activists. Indeed, there is a tendency on the Polish Left, recently expressed by for example by Piotr Forecki and Anna Zawadzka, in their provocative 'The Rule of the Golden Mean' to criticize the mainstream debates. In the eyes of those activists, debates regarding Polish memory should focus not on the definition of the nation but on the re-examination of Polish guilt. For example, they dismiss the recently opened POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews because it depicts the centuries of life of Jews in Polish lands whereas, in their view, it should focus on Polish anti-Semitism. The line of argumentation is valuable and has a potential to direct Polish debates towards new topics. As this article will go on to demonstrates, omitting of anti-Semitism is highly problematic. Yet, Polish implication in the genocide is only very slowly becoming a topic for national debate. One of the first interventions into Polish memory that brought to the fore Polish guilt was the 2000 Jan Tomasz Gross' book *Neighbours*. Published only eight years before the work on Schindler's Factory exhibition started in an earnest, it was met with public outcry and protests.[64]

These protests served as a reminder to the curators that there are certain topics out of bounds for a museum, an institution of public pedagogy.[65] They explain the decisions taken by the curators but do not make them less problematic. Since 'the trustworthiness of the museum as a memory institution', to use Susan Crane formulation, is at stake curators believe they cannot offer readings of the past that are seen as too controversial.[66] As the casus of aborted Enola Gay exhibition demonstrated even the distinguished Smithsonian Institution had to yield to public pressure in its approach to this contentious topic. The American curators did not manage to present the bomber as a symbol of death in the atomic age; this interpretation was too controversial for the public that would rather see Enola Gay as a symbol of America's triumph in the War.[67]

The aforementioned memorial debates translated directly into the work of the MHK. The direct opposition and a point of reference for the Kraków's museum was the highly successful Warsaw Rising Museum (Muzeum Powstania Warszawskiego - MPW) that represented the ethno-nationalist approach. Opened in 2004, the MPW was supported by the right-wing mayor of Warsaw and commemorated the fallen Uprising of 1944 during which the minuscule Polish underground forces tried to liberate Warsaw from the Nazi occupation before it was taken over by the Red Army coming from the East. The Uprising ended with mass casualties and the destruction of the city. It spawned a contentious debate regarding the ultimate responsibility for the death of a generation of Varsovians, a debate that Poles never managed to settle.[68] The MPW took an ethno-nationalist position in this debate, presenting the suffering of blameless Poles at the hands of barbaric Germans as an ultimate cause for glory. It demonized the occupiers, portraying them exclusively 'as inhumane and ruthless killing machines.'[69] Moreover, it diminished the importance of the Jewish past, limiting it to a short story that was 'not only concise but also present[ed] only one, Polish perspective on the events in the [Warsaw – insertion mine] Ghetto' to borrow Zuzanna Bogumił's description.[70] The MHK curators were conscious of the undertones of the Warsaw presentation and worked in the opposition to the MPW team. Indeed, members of the Museum's Board viewed the Factory as a direct response to the xenophobia of the MPW.[71]

Competition with Warsaw may have been a contributing factor for the curators but the source of their decision to offer a cosmopolitan reading of the past lied elsewhere. It was a logical consequence of more than thirty years of local, urban memory work run either in parallel to or in dialogue with Western, mostly German, American, and Israeli, memorial projects. The MHK of 2007 was an institution created from a merger of two organizations. The first was the historic MHK, a multisite institution offering comprehensive presentations on the city's past, created in the 1899. The second was the Eagle Pharmacy, the first Polish, standalone Holocaust museum opened in 1983. Both institutions were merged in 2003, and their curatorial teams and traditions were brought together.

Before the merger, the MHK for decades exhibited a collection of *judaica* in its Old Synagogue branch, and supplemented these exhibitions with small presentations on the Holocaust. From 1980 these exhibitions intended, with varied results, to break the existing taboos of Polish representations of the past. In a nominally Catholic country where Jews were habitually used as scapegoats (most recently in the 1968 when the remnant of the minority was forced to emigrate) curators insisted that Jews were part of the Kraków in-group, that they were 'us Krakowians'.[72] In places, the presentations were not unproblematic. Even

though they were created with the intention of dismantling the Otherness of Jews, in practice they reinforced this status. Visitors were assaulted with a plethora of exhibits, none of them contemporary, all highlighting the difference between Jews and Christians. As depicted in the Synagogue in the 1980s Jews dressed differently, prayed differently, even eat using different cutlery than the rest of the Kraków's population.[73] Without a chance to confront this image with any other contemporary representations, and without the possibility of meeting Jews in real life, the Catholic public left the exhibition with the image of the Other in mind. Importantly however, this was not an image of a Threating Other, otherwise widespread in the Polish culture.[74] Instead, the curators from the Synagogue insisted on presenting the historic Jews as a sympathetic community, a community with which a peaceful cohabitation was possible.

At the time when the MHK was polishing its exhibition of *judaica*, a group of activists came together to create the Eagle Pharmacy, the first Polish museum focusing solely on the Holocaust. The Eagle Pharmacy, run by a gentile Tadeusz Pankiewicz was the only pharmacy in the Kraków ghetto during the War. When the ghetto was first created Pankiewicz managed to persuade the Nazi administration that his prewar Pharmacy should be allowed to stay open. He relieved the Jewish community as much as he could. When the enclosed district was liquidated, Pankiewicz witnessed the Nazi crimes to which he would later bear witness in his book 'The Cracow Ghetto Pharmacy.'[75]

The museum in the Pharmacy was opened during the last decade of the Communist rule, at a time when free speech was still suppressed, and the Jewish Genocide was used (and abused) by the Government for short-term political gains; either to stoke internal support or to appease external critics.[76] In this environment, the Pharmacy openly talked about the Holocaust and presented it as a unique but universally important Jewish tragedy. The claims to exceptionality and uniqueness of the Holocaust, seen not as a differentiation but as distinction and a mark of incomparability, were and are problematic. They elevate the Holocaust out of history, mark it as event incomparable and unconnected historically to any other event or any other genocide. Thus, they can be placed at the bottom of Rothberg's axis of comparison. However, the Eagle Pharmacy represented the Holocaust in 1983 as unique in a bid to oppose governmental mishandling of the memory of the Genocide. For example, during its grand celebrations of the fortieth anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising the Communist Government downplayed the information about Jewish suffering and instead focused on mythicized Polish help. The intention was to remind the World about Polish

sacrifices and in so doing to improve Poland's international image, which had been tarnished by the recent introduction of Martial Law.[77]

The creators of the Pharmacy focused not on the Polish help (although some information about this part of history were present at the exhibition) but rather on the enormity of the Holocaust itself. The speaker for the group talked about 'self-destruction of people by people, nations by nations, races by races' dubbing it 'senseless,' and suggesting that it was the 'outcome of a mental illness' that had struck humanity as a whole. [78] More importantly, he noted that

> […] our friend Tadeusz Pankiewicz and his Pharmacy are not only a piece of history, nor only a matter for Podgórze, Kraków, Poland; they are a sign for all of humanity, which, to make sense of its history, that is to ensure [humanity's – insertion mine] survival, must aim to create a new order, an order based on the solidarity of all peoples.[79]

The exhibition was thus created to remind about the need for human solidarity and to oppose the future breaches of human rights at the time when official narratives pandered to nationalistic stereotypes. In consequence, its creators established a tradition of critical engagement with the past. For decades to come the Pharmacy would insist that the Holocaust was unique but universally important tragedy that required the whole of humanity to oppose similar atrocities in the future.[80]

The sources of this surprisingly open and oppositional narrative merit mentioning. Working on the eastern side of the Iron Curtain, largely in isolation from Western debates, local activists constructed a thesis of the uniqueness of the Holocaust at exactly the same time as their Western counterparts. As Gavriel Rosenfeld notes, it was precisely in the 1980s that historians such as Yehuda Bauer, Lucy Dawidowicz, and Saul Friedländer began to insist on the Holocaust's singularity.[81] In the West, the claim to uniqueness emerged due to a growing tendency to historicize and politicize the Genocide. In the eyes of Bauer, Dawidowicz, and Friedländer, this trend threatened to 'diminish the event,' leading them to assert its incomparability.[82] While there had been barely any attempts at historicizing the Jewish War past in Poland, there certainly had been attempts to politicize it. Indeed, the opening of the Pharmacy Museum *in Kraków* was scheduled for 22nd April 1983 to coincide with the outbreak of the *Warsaw* Ghetto Uprising (19th April 1943) and with the infamous government-sponsored commemorations of that event.[83] The attempt to instrumentalize

memory was obvious, and creators of the Pharmacy were aware of it. Therefore, when they asserted the uniqueness of the Jewish Genocide, they had similar motives to Western intellectuals, but they arrived at this thesis independently, and in parallel, to their Western counterparts.

Elsewhere, I trace the history of the exhibitions in both the Pharmacy and in the Synagogue from the 1990s and 2000s to suggest that their authors worked towards inclusive narratives that tried to differentiate between different groups and at the same time generate solidarity with them.[84] As the above examples demonstrate, even though such attempts were historically contingent and occasionally fraught, they nevertheless contributed to a culture of critical and cosmopolitan reading of history. This current was strong within the MHK when its curators were tasked with turning Schindler's Factory into a museum. Unlike in the 1980s, in the 2000s, the curators worked as part of the globalized memorial market. With the Iron Curtain gone, the access to Western museums and Western scholarship (both on history and museum studies) was much easier. In the 1980s even a study trip to a museum in Communist Prague proved to be nearly impossible.[85] In the 2000s the curators could freely visit exhibitions across the Globe. Indeed, they went to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and organized research in the archives of the Yad Vashem.[86] Moreover, building on the status of the Factory as a transnational site of memory, they invited a group of supranational activists to join the Programme Board, an international body created to assess the exhibition projects and support the curators.[87] Working hand in hand with Polish historians on the Board were an employee of Yad Vashem, Dr Haim Gertner (Head of the Archive) and a representative of the Krakowian Jewish diaspora, Lili Haber the head of the Association of Cracowians in Israel.[88]

Transnational Memorial Contest

The final version of the exhibition, unveiled in 2010, did not merely present the history of the Schindler Factory even though it owed its very creation to the popularity of the film. Rather the museum exhibited a broader history of wartime Kraków. In fact, 'the museum d[id] not replicate the Hollywood history [known from 'Schindler's list' – insertion mine] but deftly use[d] it for self-promotion.'[89] Moreover, the exhibition was an outcome of a transnational memory work. Representatives of supranational organizations and of foreign, national memorial agencies debated with local, Kraków professionals, and Polish historians of national standing. If we follow the suggestion of Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider then we

should assume that it was Haim Gartner and Lili Haber who were responsible for the cosmopolitan undertones of the exhibition. Yet the situation in Kraków was far more complex. The thrust to include critical, cosmopolitan interpretations, to create a representation that would to try, and *partially* succeed, to attain what Rothberg would call an expression of 'differentiated solidarity', came from the local curators.

The first call for a critical and differentiating representation of the War past was formulated at the begging of the 2008. The idea to present the history of Kraków 'through the stories of people – Poles, Jews, Germans: their daily life, attitudes, choices, tragedies' was authored by the local curators months before the first intervention of the transnational activists, before the Programme Bored was created and before the international study visits took place.[90] Yet in never came to fruition because between 2008 and 2010, the curatorial team, local politicians and transnational activists clashed over the meanings of Kraków's contested past.

Minutes from the meetings of Programme Board and internal correspondence of the MHK offer fascinating insights into the shape of this competition. Unsurprisingly, the creation of a new museum, with a potently global reach, and touching on some of the most contentious aspects of the War past draw attention of a number of memorial activists. In one of the first interventions a local politician and a city councilor, Tomasz Bobrowski, attempted to imbue the exhibition with ethno-nationalist content. As early as in August 2007 he appealed to the Mayor proposing that the Factory museum be turned into a memorial to the Polish Righteous among the Nations, and that a Wall of the Righteous be erected there. He claimed to have contacted Yad Vashem to this end and accounted for all architectural changes necessary for the Wall to be included in the exhibition in his plans.[91] His idea was clearly rooted in an ethno-nationalistic interpretation of history, representing a logical continuation of the idiom of blameless Poles-helpers that had been dominant since the early postwar years. Moreover, it redirected attention from the differentiated suffering of various ethnic groups towards the exceptional heroism and glory of the Polish nation. Even in the early 2000s these ethno-nationalist ideas were evoked to political ends. In the minds of their users, representations of Polish help were supposed to counter the slander spread by the Western media against the Polish nation. That Bobrowski represented the supposedly liberal and open-minded Civic Platform party (Platforma Obywatelska, PO) reminded the curators that attachment to the nationalist narrative remained commonplace in Polish society. The idea to build the Wall of the Righteous was eventually overthrown, but traces of the councilor's

intervention were lasting. No attempts were made to include any meaningful information about pre-War antisemitism or the wartime guilt of ethnic Poles.

Bobrowski's idea was overthrown only after protests from a member of the Programme Board. As the minutes from the March 2008 Board meeting reveal, Dr Gertner, representing Yad Vashem, 'pointed out that that Hall of the Righteous, arranged only as a presentation of noble attitudes toward Jews during the War, may lose its educational value and on occasion and against the intention of the authors *may be seen as a provocation* [emphasis in original].'[92] Instead, Dr Gertner suggested that the last section be redeveloped into what he called 'The Hall of Choices.'[93] The MHK curators used the support of Gertner, and his authority as the Yad Vashem representative, to overthrow the ethno-nationalist idea they had opposed from the beginning. Developing Gertner's idea, they also strengthened the parts of the exhibition that spoke towards differentiated solidarity. In the final version, the Hall of Choices turned out to be a place where in a chapel-like setting, short notes about the actions of Krakowians (both ethnically Polish and Jewish) were exhibited; some described acts of bravery, some sins of omission. In the adjacent room, black-and-white books containing longer and more nuanced stories about moral choices were presented.[94] Thus visitors were invited to ponder the tragic fates of the Krakowians, to compare them, and, to use Gertners' own formulation, 'to think, to question one's own reactions.'[95] In other words visitors were invited to realize the need for solidarity in opposing war and genocide in the future.

The March 2008 meeting proved to be pivotal for the final shape of the exhibition in more than one way. While the intervention of the representative of the Yad Vashem helped to strengthen the cosmopolitan aspect of the exhibition, the involvement of Lili Haber, the head of the Association of Cracowians in Israel had an opposite effect. She questioned the curators' original idea to tell 'the stories of people – Poles, Jews, Germans: their daily life, attitudes, choices, tragedies.'[96] Instead, she insisted on distancing the 'Polish-Jewish world from the German world.' In her view, in wartime Kraków there 'functioned two worlds: that of occupiers (Germans) and that of victims (Poles of both Polish and Jewish ethnicity).' [97]

As mentioned above, the draft scenario explicitly stated that Germans in Kraków were indeed occupiers. But it also tried to nuance that category differentiating between members of security forces directly involved in the persecution of the local populations and, for example, industrialists, and administrative staff taking advantage of the wartime circumstances.[98] For Haber this distinction was unacceptable. For her, the Germans were one-dimensional occupiers while Poles and Jews were simply victims. Most of Haber's ideas were promptly incorporated. The sections depicting German home life were discarded. Furthermore, in their

comments for the graphic designers, drafted after the March 2008 Board meeting, the curators noted that using deep, warm colors to depict German-only spaces would 'cause the visitors to feel at home – cozy and pleasant, and this is not our intention.'[99] The intention thus became to maintain the division between 'us – the victims' and 'them – the perpetrators.' At the same time however, the curators resisted the urge to use one-dimensional stereotypes. They provided some general information about the Germans' daily lives, and openly described Nazi endeavors to improve the quality of life in the city. The Nazis constructed, for example, a new housing district that was originally designed for the use of German residents only, but that after the War became highly sought-after by Krakowians.

Interestingly, while separating the 'German world' from the 'Polish-Jewish world' Lili Haber referred to 'Poles of both Polish and Jewish ethnicity,'[100] thus combining an inclusive vision of the past, in which Poles and Jews were members of one nation, with an exclusive vision in which Germans were reduced to criminals. This is an interesting statement as it demonstrates how the process of cosmopolitanization of memory, of creation of differentiated representations that support solidarity between groups, is not a zero-sum game. Haber, a representative of an organization of people who left Kraków after the War, having survived the Holocaust, had reason to isolate Poles from Jews. After all, a number of members of her Association did not leave Poland on their own volition but rather were forced out in one of the waves of the postwar anti-Jewish purges. Ethnic Poles insisted that Jews were not only their Other but were also a Threating Other who did not belong in the mono-ethnic country. Nevertheless, Haber managed to overcome this potential prejudice. At the same time however, she espoused another stereotype and envisaged Germans as the Other in relation to Poles and Jews.

The Final Product

The final version of the exhibition followed Lily Haber's ideas surprisingly closely. If in 2008 the curators set out to represent parallel stories of Poles, Jews and Germans affected by the War, then by the 2010 they had understood and partially accepted the strength of ethno-nationalist and exclusive narratives. Bobrowksi's intervention and Haber's criticism reminded them how deeply the idioms of blameless, heroic Poles, evil German perpetrators, and passive Jews were entrenched. Working within the frameworks of Polish and Jewish memory and in dialogue with European and global representations, the curators decided to pick their battles carefully. They rolled back some of the ideas that would create

controversies and focused on other concepts, that nevertheless pushed the boundaries of local and global memorial frameworks. They symbolically reintegrated Jews into Polish society and they broke away from the idiom of Polish martyrdom. At the same time, they never acknowledged Polish implication in the Holocaust and struggled with their depiction of the Germans. On one hand, they represented Germans as ruthless killers, and omitted information about the historical conditions that made them such; on the other, they did provide some information about German projects that were not war crimes.

To strengthen their message, and to makes sure it would resonate with a modern audience, the curatorial team created an immersive museum experience based around reconstructions of spaces and *mise-en-scène*. In effect, Schindler's Factory offered its audiences the chance to take a walk through wartime Kraków. Visitors were transported through time, to the long-lost past; they walked through almost thirty sites, from a photographer's atelier, through a tenement hall, squares and plazas, streets, parks, flats, a barber shop, a train station, a bunker. At one point, the designers constructed a replica tram car.[101] Throughout these spaces, the curators told stories, grouped into fourteen themes. They included information on life in Kraków, on life in the Ghetto, on War-time resistance and the clandestine Polish state. They talked about the Plaszow camp, and the German administration and its approach to Kraków's inhabitants. The use of reconstructions followed global trends but it was who was and how they were represented in those spaces that were the most important parts of the exhibition. Some sections depicted the public face of German occupiers; some focused on public and private lives of Poles and Jews. Importantly, some mixed Jewish and Polish stories.[102]

'In this space, we show Poles and Jews in a parallel manner.'[103] This message, from the curators to the graphic designers, reveals that the curators were determined to merge the narratives on ethnic Poles and Jews. In all the previous exhibitions organized in the city the division of Krakowians into Poles and Jews featured prominently. They were citizens of Kraków but also two distinct categories of people. Moreover, from 1983, presentations had expounded the uniqueness of the Holocaust, which further contributed to the separation of the two groups. In 2010, however, the curators changed their point of view, and decided to depict war in Kraków as *some* of the citizens of the city had seen and felt it. The division into 'racial' categories was not at all evident when investigated through *selected* stories of ordinary Krakowians. For some of them the experience of division into Poles and Jews was new, was introduced by the Nazis. Moreover, the curators did not negate the historical singularity of the Jewish Genocide, but represented it, along with the persecution of ethnic

Poles, with greater attention to historical accuracy. The atrocities committed against Jews and Poles were respectively depicted as two different but interconnected crimes, outcomes of evolving Nazi policies, and as events that happened in the same city, though ultimately in isolation from one another.

This merging of different stories was built into the design of the exhibitions in a way that acknowledged the similarities and, most importantly, differences between the fates of both groups. The opening section, the photographer's atelier, showed pre-war Kraków using 'photographs of contemporary [prewar] Krakowians: Christians and Jews.'[104] The part telling the story of the early stages of Nazi occupation included the first pieces of information on the exclusion of Jews from society. At this stage, the narrative was presented through a set of common spaces, and gradually depicted the isolation of the Jews. For example, the information on the expulsion of the majority of Kraków's Jews was delivered on the 'mixed' streets. Only later, when the route led round to the section on the ghetto, were the Polish and Jewish narratives isolated from each other. In the section that spelled the start of the formal isolation of the groups, the curators decided to erect a mock-up of the ghetto wall. The visitors walked up the staircase which outlined the story of relocation to and from the ghetto, entered a 'Polish' street, walked along and around the fence to enter the 'Jewish' section. Executed in this way, the exhibition left visitors in no doubt that the suffering of the Jews was different to that of the Poles; the Holocaust was crime of different magnitude. This impression was magnified by the section on Oskar Schindler and his list. Practicalities (the original Schilder's office was discovered when the works were already under way) required it was placed achronologically next to the section on the creation of the ghetto. It broke with the structure of the exhibition, but this break served to highlight the importance of the message about the Holocaust.

The story of the ghetto begun with information on relocations and the plunder of Jewish wealth, before interlinking with – but remaining clearly distinguished from – sections on family life in 'Polish' Kraków and forced labor. This nuanced intertwining served to highlight the impression that the separation of Jews and ethnic Poles was artificial, and that it had divided the city and people living in it. Toward the end of the exhibition, in the 'Polish' space, information on Jews hiding on the 'Aryan' side was provided again, to emphasize that isolation of the groups was never total. Moreover, the photographs used at the new exhibition depicted both Orthodox and highly assimilated Jews,[105] while the authors of the booklet accompanying the presentation used the non-capitalized term 'żydzi' to describe members of the minority. In Polish language non-capitalized spelling denominates a follower of Judaism

while the capitalized version denotes a member of a separate nation. The term is thus one of the few ways of highlighting that 'Christians' (curators' imprecise term of choice for ethnic Poles) and 'Jews' were members of one nation.

The decision to represent ethnic Poles and Jews as members of one nation, however, ultimately became an ungrounded insistence on showing their harmonious coexistence. The anti-Semitism of ethnically Polish Krakowians was noticeable only in two instances, at the beginning and the end of the presentation respectively, and in both cases were downplayed. First, on the staircase leading to the entrance to the main exhibition, four photographs were exhibited. One depicted a group of ethnic Poles passing a group of Hasidic Jews on a street, with one of the Poles visibly grimacing.[106] The initial section of the exhibition, the photographer's atelier, documented prewar life in the city but did not mention the creation of 'ghetto benches' at the University, or the attacks on the Jewish businesses. Throughout the exhibition, anti-Jewish crimes were consistently ascribed to the *szmalcownicy*: infamous outcasts, people on the social margins, and criminals, who informed on Jews. The Hall of Choices offered the potential to balance that representation, but even here the curators chose not to face Polish crimes directly. To quote the official accompanying booklet, the first part of the Hall referred to 'attitudes of neglect, lack of empathy,' both of which were understandable under the duress of the War and were qualitatively different to racial prejudice.[107] The second part of the Hall, which presented longer stories, mentioned '*volksdeutsche*, informers, collaborators, *szmalcownicy* who for money, satisfaction or simply out of fear denounced the Poles […] hiding Jews to their deaths.'[108] Anti-Semitism was not mentioned, and all the crimes were attributed to either criminals or *volksdeutsche*, both groups that stood outside of the Polish community.

Even though the museum aimed to speak to a global audience, even though it was shaped by international interventions, it was nevertheless a reflection of Polish memorial debates. In the first years of the twenty-first century those debates revolved around the problem of the symbolic stretching of the borders of Polishness. The inclusion of Jews into Polish society was seen as a symbol of the inclusion of other minority groups. This is the debate the curators decided to enter. To do so, and to maintain the status of an uncontroversial and therefore effective institution of public pedagogy, they decided to maintain the other myth: that of Polish innocence. This begs the question whether Schindler's Factory offered a cosmopolitan exhibition or not.

This article would suggest that as of 2010, and potentially for a decade or two afterwards, the Schindler's Factory exhibition could be read as a cosmopolitan intervention but that this

reading would change with the evolution of the Polish memorial framework. Even at the time of writing of this text (late 2018), debates about Polish perpetrators have the potential to ignite public outcry. When or if the idiom of Poles-perpetrators takes hold on the collective memory, any exhibition that does not tackle this problem will become outdated.

The insistence that the Schindler's Factory cosmopolitanizes the Polish memory rests on the way it depicts Polish-Jewish relations but also on what it omits. As mentioned above, the curators went to some length to oppose councilor Bobrowski who pushed for the inclusion of a memorial to the Polish Righteous at the museum. As Jan Grabowski reminds as the Polish Righteous, those Poles who during the War helped Jews and were recognized for this by the Yad Vashem, are often used in the 'Righteous defense.'[109] This defence claims that *no* Poles can be called anti-Semites because *some* of them helped Jews. Obviously, Yad Vashem honors the courageous individuals to highlight the risk they took, rather than to exonerate Poles of accusations of anti-Semitism. In Grabowski's view it is the 'context and goals' that decide whether evocation of Righteous functions as the 'Righteous defense' or not.[110]

The same goes for the consequences of the evocation of nostalgic myth of cooperation and harmonious existence between Poles and Jews. Here I want to evoke Rothberg's axis again. The MHK aimed to support cooperation and not competitions between group. The myth of coexistence was evoked not to silence charges of anti-Semitism but to demonstrate that peaceful co-operation and coexisting with the Other is possible. What little information about Polish anti-Semitism there was, supports this reading of the exhibition. The Hall of Choices tells stories of neglect and abandonment, of some Poles that failed some Jews. The information about widespread Nazi terror was presented to justify those failures but the sparse information about sins of omission combined with absence of information about the Righteous offered a new, for Polish collective memory, vision of the past. Admittedly this set the bar for cosmopolitan intervention low but then Poland is characterized by a widespread anti-Semitism that thrives in a country that did not have any meaningful Jewish minority since the 1940s.

The representation of the Germans, another traditional Polish Other, followed the suggestion of Lili Haber and her idea to present two separate worlds: that of occupiers and that of victims. In fact, the curators decided that the 'Presence of the Germans in Kraków should be depicted in an open space [streets not private flats – insertion mine], because it was only there where Poles and Jews could see them.'[111] In effect, the visitors of Schindler's Factory were again invited to step in the shoes of the victims and to observe the city around them from this perspective. Whatever the visitors saw of the Nazi world was depicted from

the ‘outside’, without glimpses into the private lives of the Germans. Thus, the occupational polices were communicated via propaganda posters and recordings, without an insight into the decision-making process. German life was depicted as an intrusion into formerly Polish spaces. Visitors could see well-known Kraków buildings adored with swastika banners, Nazi soldiers and German couples strolling down the streets, but not much more. In the Polish and Jewish sections visitors were invited into the flats of victims and could ‘feel’ the duress of their daily life. No German private spaces were reconstructed. This imbalance served to strengthen the impression of separation between occupiers and victims.

At the same time however, the curators showed more than just Nazi barbarism and cruelty. The exhibition employed a plethora of photographs depicting the normal, daily lives of Germans. Much unlike in the Warsaw Rising Museum, a constant point of reference for the Kraków curators and Polish public in general, Germans in Kraków were not exclusively ‘inhumane and ruthless killing machines.’[112] Bogumił, who compared both Museums was particularly stricken by an excerpt from a testimony of a Polish girl who was envious of the good looks of a German girl. In Bogumił’s view, touches like this helped to build ‘a complex image of the occupiers and force[d] the visitor to reflect deeply’ on whether the Nazis were ‘<<beasts>> not people.’[113] Information about good looking German girls is a far cry from a presentation of ‘stories of people – Poles, Jews, Germans: their daily life, attitudes, choices, tragedies.’[114] It is nevertheless a step towards a nuanced depiction of the Germans and an attempt at dismantling their status as the Other.

The impact of the content of the exhibition was reinforced by the design of the presentation. Schindler’s Factory offered a trip back in time and collapsed the gap between the present and the past. Reconstructed spaces were designed to allow visitors to ‘feel’ how people in the wartime Kraków felt, to be part of that life. Wandering down the streets and entering flats visitors could hear songs, radio broadcasts, and even gossip. As anaesthetized as this symbolic journey back in time was it was also potentially an experience strong enough to force the visitors to rethink their identities, norms, and values. This type of presentation have, or are supposed to have, ‘the ability to shape that person’s subjectivity and politics’ to use Alison Landsberg’s formulation.[115] The affective engagement with the past engendered by modern museums such as Schindler’s Factory allows for changes and redefinitions of identity, but not according to traditional (e.g. nationalistic) values; on the contrary, according to Sarah Jones the ‘response to human rights abuses will inspire positive political engagement.’[116] Thus ‘traveling back in time’ to ‘experience’ the life in the wartime Kraków had the potential to strengthen the differentiated solidarity espoused by the curators.

Importantly, as Erica Lehrer notes, there is almost no research done in Poland to confirm whether or not the immersive museum experience achieves its designed effect.[117]

Conclusion

Levy and Sznaider claim that espousing the perspective of the victim is conditional for the emergence of cosmopolitan memory. They emphasize that 'cosmopolitan memory thus implies some recognition of the history (and the memories) of the "Other".'[118] Indeed, the curators from the MHK adopted the perspective of the Holocaust's victims, seemingly making steps to 'defend the equality and freedom of all human beings,' as Montserrat Guibernau argues.[119] The Factory exhibition continued the tradition started in Kraków in the 1980s and insisted on depicting ethnically Polish and Jewish Krakowians as members of one group and one nation. In so doing it violated some longstanding Polish taboos while at the same time reinforced other stereotypes. Moreover, the curators invited visitors to assume the identity of the wartime Krakowians, to imagine how the occupation felt. They enabled visitors to reflect on how arbitrary the Nazi policies and the subsequent Genocide were. Conscious of historical nuance and aware of decade long memorial competitions they depicted the Holocaust and the crimes against Poles as two separate, different in scope, events that nevertheless affected Krakowians and took place in their city, a city they shared even during the darkest moments of the occupation. It seems that in so doing they created an exhibition that can be assessed as a relatively strong example of differentiated solidarity.

Marring the picture, however, is the lack of reference to pre-War anti-Semitism and wartime complicity in Nazi crimes and the problematic image of Germans. To avoid controversy, the curators limited the references about Polish anti-Semitism to a few mentions of *szmalcownicy*, criminals living on the margins of society. Moreover, they failed to mention any of the Polish sins other that of neglect. Thus, the exhibition went to great lengths to reconcile ethnic Poles with their national Other, the Jews, even at the cost of falling back on stereotypies and myths. It did not however, made the same effort in relation to the other commonly stereotyped nation: the Germans. A German visitor to the Museum could only learn about Nazi crimes, Polish or Jewish visitors could only see occupiers. No one was allowed to see Germans as human beings. Thus, some parts of the exhibition fall short of embracing that cosmopolitanism very visible in other sections.

The Schindler's Factory creates a cosmopolitan past that Poland never had. Disregarding the history of Polish anti-Semitism, the curators intended to effect a significant change in the

way Poles defined Polishness. Interestingly, this cosmopolitan vision is the result of an interplay between local curators, local politicians, and supranational memory activists operating inside of the frameworks of Polish collective memory.

From at least 1980 Kraków memory activists worked on overcoming nationalist stereotypes and on devising a critical narrative about the contentious past. Often working in isolation from the West, they nevertheless made steps to cosmopolitanize local representations of the War. The attempts to pursue these ideas in the 2010 Schindler Factory exhibition were mitigated not only by local nationalists but also by a representative of a supranational organization. Lily Haber came from Israel, otherwise credited by Levi and Sznader as the cradle of cosmopolitan memory on the Holocaust. Moreover, she represented Western influences, seen by Meng as a force demanding cosmopolitanization of local memory. Yet it was Haber who reminded the Kraków curators about the power of exclusive and nationalizing narratives. In the eyes of the curators it was councilor Bobrowski, the promoter of the cause of the Polish Righteous, who represented the ethno-nationalist views. They managed to skillfully play up his influence against that of the members of the Programme Boards whom they saw as open minded and supportive. However, when analyzed through Michael Rothberg's grid, the actions of Lily Haber register as similar to those of Bobrowski.

Untimely, this article sheds light on the fraught process of cosmopolitanization of memory. It agrees with scholars such as Beck and Delanlty who see cosmopolitanism as a process, a way of attaining a normative ideal. As the history of Schindler's Factory reveals, the sources of cosmopolitan effort can be identified both in local and supranational interventions. Even more interestingly, the factors limiting the cosmopolitan projects stem not only from the local, ethno-nationalist interpretations. They can also be found in interventions of supranational activists.

Notes

The author would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for particularly insightful and insisting comments.

[1] Kraków, AMHK, Wystawa stała „Kraków – czas okupacji 1939-1945" – (Scenariusz wystawy), 2008-09, Sig. 603/4, fol. 7.
[2] Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Neutralizing Memory. The Jew in Contemporar Poland* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1989), 104.

[3] For details on ethno-nationalist narrative on the polish past see Joanna B. Michlic, 'The Dark Past: Polish-Jewish Realtions in the Shadow of the Holocaust', in Dorota Glowacka and Joanna Zylinska, eds., *Imaginary Neighbors. Mediating Polish-Jewish Relations after the Holocaust* (Lincoln and London: Univesity of Nebraska Press, 2007), 21-22.
[4] Michael Meng, *Shattered Spaces: Encountering Jewish Ruins in Postwar Germany and Poland* (Cambridge, Massachusetts - London: Harvard University Press, 2011), 250.
[5] Montserrat Guibernau, *The Identity of Nations* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 159.
[6] Ibid., 160.
[7] Ibid., 161.
[8] Meng, *Shattered Spaces*, 250.
[9] Sharon Macdonald, *Memorylands. Heritage and Identity in Europe Today* (New York and London: Routledge, 2013), 191.
[10] Ewa Ochman, 'Memory of War and Cosmopolitan Solidarity', in Nina Glick Schiller and Andrew Irving, eds., *Whose Cosmopolitanism? Critical Perspectives, Relationalities and Discontents* (New York - Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2015), 224.
[11] Gerard Delanty, 'Introduction. The emerging field of cosmopolitan studies', in Gerard Delanty, ed., *Routledge Handbook of Cosmopolitan Studies* (Oxford – New York: Routledge, 2012), 5.
[12] David Miller, 'Cosmopolitanism: a critique', *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 5, no. 3 (2002), 84.
[13] Blossom Ngum Fondo, 'Cosmopolitanism and its Discontents: Postcolonialism and the Immigrant Experience in Andrea Levy's Small Island', *Zagadnienia Rodzajów Literackich*, LVII, no. 1 (2014), 62.
[14] Gerard Delanty, 'The idea of critical cosmopolitanism', in Gerard Delanty, ed., *Routledge Handbook of Cosmopolitan Studies*, (Oxford – New York: Routledge, 2012), 44-45.
[15] Delanty, 'The idea', 38.
[16] Delanty, 'The idea', 38.
[17] Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, *The Holocaust and Memory in The Global Age* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), 4.
[18] Ibid., 23.
[19] Ibid., 165-179.
[20] Ibid., 4.
[21] Marta Smagacz-Poziemska, *The Revitalization of Urban Space: Social Changes in Krakow's Kazimierz and the Ticinese District in Milan*, *Higher Education* (Pisa: Edizioni Plus, Pisa Unniversity Press, 2008), 5; Levy and Sznaider, *The Holocaust*, 3.
[22] Levy and Sznaider, *The Holocaust*, 3.
[23] Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, 'Memory Unbound The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 5, no.1 (2002), 100.
[24] James Mark, *The Unfinished Revolution. Making Sense of the Communist Past in Central-Easter Europe* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), 95.
[25] Mark, *The Unfinished Revolution,* 95; Marek Kucia, 'The Europeanization of Holocaust Memory and Eastern Europe', *East European Politics & Societies*, 30, no.1 (2016), 102 and further. See also Maria Mälksoo, *The Politics of Becoming European. A Study of Polish and Baltic Post-Cold War Security Imaginaries* (New York and London: Routledge, 2010), 85; Eva-Clarita Onken, 'The Baltic States and Moscow's 9 May Commemoration: Analysing Memory Politics in Europe', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 59 (2007), 24.
[26] See for example: Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad, 'Introduction', in Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad, eds., *Memory in a Global Age. Discourses, Practices and Trajectories* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), also Macdonald, *Memorylands*, 188.

[27] Andreas Huyssen, 'International Human Rights and the Politics of Memory: Limits and Challenges', *Criticism*, 53, no.4 (2011), p. 616.
[28] Geneviève Zubrzycki, *The Crosses of the Auschwitz: nationalism and religion in post-communist Poland* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 16.
[29] Erica Lehrer, Michael Meng, 'Introduction', in Erica Lehrer, Michael Meng, eds., *Jewish Space in Contemporary Poland* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 7.
[30] Erica Lehrer, 'Can there be a conciliatory heritage?', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 16, np. 4-5 (2010), 270.
[31] Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory. Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); Michael Rothberg 'From Gaza to Warsaw: Mapping Multidirectional Memory', *Criticism*, 53, no.4 (2011).
[32] Rothberg, 'From Gaza', 523.
[33] Ibid., 523.
[34] Ibid., 525.
[35] Ibid., 527.
[36] Ibid., 527.
[37] Ibid., 520 and 532.
[38] Ibid., 526.
[39] AMHK, 'Wystawa stała „Kraków – czas okupacji 1939-1945" (Scenariusz wystawy), 2008-09,' Sig. 603/4, fol. 7.
[40] Ryszard Kotarba, *Niemiecki obóz w Płaszowie 1942-1945* (Warszawa - Kraków, 2009), 23-24.
[41] Michał Galas and Antony Polonsky, 'Introduction', in Michał Galas and Antony Polonsky, eds., *Polin. Studies in Polish Jewry. Jews in Krakow* (Oxford - Portland: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2011), 46.
[42] Antony Polonsky, 'The Jews in Poland and Russia. Volume III, 1914-2008' (Oxford - Portland: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2012), 140.
[43]Galas & Polonsky, 'Introduction', 22.
[44] Polonsky, 'The Jews', 87.
[45] A. Chwalba, *Okupacyjny Krakow*, 158.
[46] A. Chwalba, *Okupacyjny Krakow*, 158.
[47] Anna Marszałek and Monika Bednarek, *Fabryka Emalia Oskara Schindlera. Przewodnik* (Kraków: Muzeum Historyczne Miasta Krakowa, 2011), 7.
[48] Marszałek and Bednarek, *Fabryka*, 7.
[49] Meng, *Shattered Spaces*, 74.
[50] The core team consisted of five members who were supported by a number of researchers. The archival documents do not always identify individual contributors by name. For those reasons, throughout the article, I will referee to 'the curators' instead of naming individual people.
[51] AMHK, 'Wystawa stała „Kraków – czas okupacji 1939-1945" (Scenariusz wystawy), 2008-09,' Sig. 603/4, fol. 7.
[52] Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992).
[53] Andrzej Chwalba, *Okupacyjny Kraków w latach 1939-1945*, (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2002), 41-82.
[54] AMHK, 'Korespondencja, 2007,' Sig. 602/1, fol. 11.
[55] AMHK, 'Korespondencja, 2007,' Sig. 602/1, fol. 11.
[56] AMHK, 'Wystawa stała „Kraków – czas okupacji 1939-1945" (Scenariusz wystawy), 2008-09,' Sig. 603/4, fol. 7.

[57] AMHK, 'Wystawa stała „Kraków – czas okupacji 1939-1945" (Scenariusz wystawy), 2008-09,' Sig. 603/4, fol. 7.
[58] AMHK, 'Wystawa stała „Kraków – czas okupacji 1939-1945" (Scenariusz wystawy), 2008-09,' Sig. 603/4, fol. 7.
[59] Jolanta Ambrosewicz-Jacobs, 'The Holocaust and Coming to Terms with the Past in Post-Communist Poland', *Ina Levine Annual Lecture,* (Washington: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2012), 3.
[60] Michlic, 'The Dark Past', 21-22.
[61] Zubrzycki, 'Nationalism', 69.
[62] Zubrzycki 'Nationalism', 75-78.
[63] Zubrzycki, 'Nationalism', 93.
[64] for details of the controversy see: Michlic, 'The Dark Past', 25.
[65] Gross succeeded at introducing a new topic to memorial debates but not in instilling the idiom of Poles-murderers as part of the national memorial framework. Indeed, as the heated debate around 2018 Jan Grabowski and Barbara Engelking *Dalej jest noc. Losy Żydów w wybranych powiatach okupowanej Polski* demonstrate the topic is still highly contentious.
[66] Susan Crane, 'Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum', *History and Theory,* 36, no.4 (1997), 45.
[67] Crane, 'Memory', 45, 58-59.
[68] Marcin Napiórkowski, *Powstanie umarlych. Historia pamieci 1944-2014* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej, 2016).
[69] Zuzanna Bogumił, 'Miejsce pamięci versus symulacja przeszłości - Druga Wojna Światowa na wystawach historycznych', *Kultura i Społeczeństwo,* LV, no.4 (2011), 157.
[70] Ibid., 158-9.
[71] Personal communication with Professor Krzysztof Zamorski from The Council of the MHK, 28/06/2014.
[72] AMHK, 'Wystawa Stała „Z Dziejów"', Syg. 157/3.
[73] AMHK, 'Wystawa Stała „Z Dziejów"', Syg. 157/3.
[74] Magdalena Waligórska, *Klezmer's Afterlife. An Ethnography of the Jewish Music Revival in Poland and Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 143-146.
[75] Anna Pióro, *Apteka Tadeusza Pankiewicza w getcie krakowskim. Przedownik* (Kraków: Muzeum Historyczne Miasta Krakowa, 2013), 208.
[76] Janek Gryta, *Remembering the Holocaust and the Jewish Past in Kraków, 1980-2013,* (PhD diss, University of Manchester, 2016), 123.
[77] Renata Kobylarz, *Walka o Pamięć. Polityczne aspekty obchodów rocznicy powstania w Getcie Warszawskim 1944–1989* (Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2007), 317.
[78] Kraków, AIPN, 'Materiały dotyczące obchodów 40 rocznicy likwidacji getta krakowskiego', Sig. Kr 1/249, fol. 61.
[79] Ibid., fol. 62.
[80] See Gryta, *Remembering,* 149 and further.
[81] Gavriel D. Rosenfeld, 'The Politics of Uniqueness: Reflections on the Recent Polemical Turn in Holocaust and Genocide Scholarship', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies,* 13 (1999), 35.
[82] Ibid., 30.
[83] See Pióro *Apteka,* 212.
[84] See Gryta, *Remembering,* 149 and further.
[85] AMHK, 'Wystawa Stała „Z Dziejów"', Syg. 157/3.
[86] AMHK, 'Korespondencja, 2008', Sig. 603/2, fol. 549.
[87] AMHK, 'Korespondencja, 2007,' Sig. 602/1, fols, 157 and 187.

[88] AMHK, 'Korespondencja, 2007,' Sig. 602/1, fols, 189-191.
[89] Bogumił, 'Miejsce', 163.
[90] AMHK, 'Kraków – czas okupacji 1939-1945,' Sig. 603/4, fol. 7.
[91] AMHK, 'Korespondencja, 2007', Sig. 602/1, fol. 159.
[92] AMHK, 'Korespondencja, 2008', Sig. 603/2, fol. 139.
[93] Ibid., fol. 107.
[94] AMHK, 'Kraków – czas okupacji 1939-1945,' Sig. 603/4, fol. 77-79.
[95] AMHK, 'Korespondencja, 2008', Sig. 603/2, fol. 107.
[96] AMHK, 'Kraków – czas okupacji 1939-1945,' Sig. 603/4, fol. 7.
[97] AMHK, 'Korespondencja, 2008', Sig. 603/2, fol. 109.
[98] AMHK, 'Kraków – czas okupacji 1939-1945,' Sig. 603/4, fol.7.
[99] Ibid., fol. 655.
[100] AMHK, 'Korespondencja, 2008', Sig. 603/2, fol. 109.
[101] AMHK, 'Kraków – czas okupacji 1939-1945,' Sig. 603/4, fols. 7 – 37.
[102] Ibid., fol. 7.
[103] AMHK, 'Korespondencja, 2008', Sig. 603/2, fol. 629.
[104] Marszałek and Bednarek, p. 10.
[105] AMHK, 'Korespondencja, 2008', Sig. 603/2, fols. 629-639.
[106] Anna Ziębińska-Witek, *Historia w muzeach. Studium ekspozycji Holokaustu* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS, 2011), 194.
[107] Marszałek and Bednarek, *Fabryka*, 40.
[108] Ibid., 40.
[109] Jan Grabowski, 'The Holocaust as a Polish Problem', in Irena Grudzińska-Gross and Iwa Nawrocki, eds. *Poland and Polin: new interpretations in Polish-Jewish studies* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Edition, 2016), 19.
[110] Grabowski, 'The Holocaust', 19.
[111] AMHK, 'Korespondencja, 2008', Sig. 603/2, fol. 655.
[112] Bogumił, 'Miejsce', 157-8.
[113] Ibid., 164.
[114] AMHK, 'Kraków – czas okupacji 1939-1945,' Sig. 603/4, fol.
[115] Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory. The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 2.
[116] Sara Jones, *The Media of Testimony. Remembering the East German Stasi in The Berlin Republic* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 43.
[117] Lehrer, 'Public Pedagogy', 203.
[118] Levy and Sznaider, *Memory Unbound*, 103.
[119] Guibernau, 'The Identity', 161.

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